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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NASSAU 002089

SIPDIS

PASS TO KEVIN BROWN, INL/LP  
PASS TO DOCONNOR, WHA/CAR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/16/2013

TAGS: [BF](#) [SNAR](#) [OPBAT](#)

SUBJECT: THREE MAJOR SEIZURES FOR OPBAT THIS WEEK

#### Summary

[11.](#) (U) In a particularly successful week's work, the Royal Bahamian Police Force and Operation Bahamas Turks and Caicos (OPBAT) scored three significant successes during October 10-14, arresting 13 individuals and seizing over \$10 million dollars worth of cocaine, marijuana and hashish oil in addition to boats and vehicles. USG-funded assets and personnel were key to this week's results.  
End of Summary

Coordination is still our best asset

[12.](#) (C) During an operation on Tuesday October 14, the Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU), the Royal Bahamian Police Force's special vetted unit, acted on intelligence provided by USG sources that a "go-fast" boat was transporting a large quantity of contraband. An OPBAT marine unit deployed identified the vessel, followed the suspects, and arrested inland 10 individuals suspected of being connected to the Austin Knowles drug trafficking organization.

[13.](#) (U) The Knowles organization is reputedly the largest drug trafficking organization in the Bahamas. Knowles is currently serving a prison sentence in Her Majesty's Prison at Fox Hill in Nassau. The USG is seeking his extradition to face federal drug charges in Florida.

#### Retained Memory Reveals Suspects' Movements, Drugs Location

[14.](#) (C/Sensitive) Crucial to the latest drug seizure was the confiscation of two Global Positioning System (GPS) devices from the suspects that allowed U.S. and Bahamian authorities to backtrack the suspects' movements and supply the missing link between the suspects and the contraband. Once the suspects' GPS devices were in OPBAT's possession, they contacted U.S. Coast Guard experts who were able to use the units' software to identify the subjects' movements over the previous ten hours.

[15.](#) (C) Once coordinates of the suspects' movements had been downloaded by USCG experts, it just took few hours for OPBAT personnel to be deployed to the coordinates and, following fresh tire tracks in the mud, OPBAT was able to uncover more than 17 bales of cocaine hidden in a cave in Eleuthera. The 1105 pounds of cocaine have an estimated street value of \$17 million.

Drug busts are adding up

[16.](#) (U) Another successful operative was carried out on Friday October 10, when the Royal Bahamian Police Force received information that a vessel moored at the harbor in Nassau was transporting contraband. After an extensive search, DEU personnel found hidden in the boat of Canadian citizen 1065 pounds of hashish oil in addition to a small amount of marijuana and hashish. Hashish oil is a narcotic favored in the Canadian drug market. The market value of the contraband is more than \$2 million dollars. The Canadian subject is cooperating with the authorities.

[17.](#) (U) Also on October 10th, OPBAT marine assets during a routine patrol observed a "go-fast" boat acting in a suspicious manner. After the officers initiated a chase, the individuals in the boat started throwing the bales to the water. The Police recovered 3,480 pounds of marijuana- with a street value of \$3 million.

#### Comment

[17.](#) (C) This week's successful seizures again highlighted the effectiveness of the multi-agency, multi-national, multi-functional approach to illegal drug interdiction employed by OPBAT. It also illustrated the key role played by intelligence, flexibility, and the quick response that having assets immediately available to respond to targets of opportunity play in the on-going counter-drug effort.

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